

JEFFERSON COUNTY

AND



BIRMINGHAM



ALABAMA



Jefferson County and Birmingham, Alabama

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OF THE

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BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

INTRODUCTORY

This publication issued by the Birmingham, Alabama, Chamber of Commerce deals with the agricultural possibilities of a district, the great industrial importance of which has been more and more realized within the last few years; and the marvelous industrial growth and development of which during the past decade have been the wonder of the world. The vast mineral resources of the Birmingham District created in its midst, as if by magic, a wonderful city of 140,000 people. But otherwise the development was mainly on industrial lines. As a consequence the City of Birmingham and the Birmingham District with its 50,000 working men must buy most of the foodstuffs they consume from other sections of this country and Birmingham sends away three million dollars annually for vegetables alone, all of which could be raised on the thousands of acres of lands now lying idle in the vicinity of the city and in Jefferson County.

To remedy such a condition, and at the same time materially aid the development and progress of its city and county, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce—an aggregation of 1,200 prominent business and industrial men—established a special department, with a committee of its own, whose sole aim and purpose is the agricultural development and settlement of the Birmingham District and Jefferson County.

This publication represents the first efforts of the committee in the carrying out of its plans. It is a message to homeseekers to come to a section where the climate is superb, where land is cheap and of great productiveness—a section of vast agricultural and industrial resources—teeming with opportunities for every man who is industrious and ambitious to have a home of his own. This publication furthers no special interest; it is not a real estate propaganda for the benefit of any land company. The expenses of its make-up and promulgation are paid from a fund subscribed to by patriotic citizens, with no other benefit or reward in view than the progress and development of their city and county and every word printed within its columns and every picture shown upon its pages is guaranteed by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce to be facts, and nothing but the absolute truth about the district.

No attempts are made to mislead the readers with elaborate descriptions, extravagant claims or fine literary style of language. Plain facts of what this section offers are stated in plain language, and written by responsible officials and authorities.

The climate of Birmingham and vicinity is briefly yet very ably discussed by Mr. Wm. Lehman, the local official of the U. S. Weather Bureau.

The articles upon the agricultural conditions, possibilities, etc., of the Birmingham District and Jefferson County are written by Mr. O. L. Ayrs, Agriculturist of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, formerly of the Bureau of Soils, U. S. Department of Agriculture; and Mr. G. B. McVay, a high authority on all subjects of agriculture and a frequent contributor to the literature of State and U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Besides these articles, we reprint verbatim a part of the U. S. Soil Survey of Jefferson County—published this year—a verification of all we claim for our section by an indisputable authority.

The illustrations shown are from photographs taken on various farms, gardens and fields in our section and they are, together with the few letters from local gardeners, which we had room to print, bonafide evidences of the productiveness of our soils and the great opportunities for every kind of agricultural pursuit in our district and county.

Yet while the facts related through the following pages show the marvelous resources and unsurpassed possibilities of the Birmingham District and Jefferson County, the reader must bear in mind that it requires industry, intelligence and perseverance to develop these resources and possibilities.

Here, as elsewhere, success means intelligent activity and thrift. When these are applied, however, the homeseeker from the North, West, or East will find a section here where his tasks are easier to perform, where the man of limited means can do more on a small scale with less cost and expense and where his industry will bring him quicker and larger returns than in any other section of this country.

In conclusion, we want to say to all who are looking for better opportunities, than what they have at present—who want to live in a healthful climate where they can follow their various pursuits twelve months in the year—that we extend to every newcomer not only our welcome, but that we will assist them in every possible way to be advantageously located in our district and to make the right beginning.

Birmingham, Alabama, January, 1911.

The Committee of the Farm Movement Department of the Chamber of Commerce.

A. H. FORD, President, Chamber of Com.

JOHN H. ADAMS, Chairman.

G. B. McCORMACK.

SID W. LEE.

JAMES BONNYMAN.

S. HECHINGER, Secretary.

Jefferson County, Birmingham and the Birmingham District, What They Offer to the Home-Seeker.

BY S. HECHINGER, SECRETARY FARM MOVEMENT DEPARTMENT, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

When the homeseeker and man of family who is striving to better his condition seeks a new location, he will as a matter of course give preference to a section which has a thriving and progressive city in its midst.

A city in almost every instance is a sure indication of the district in which it is located. A growing, prosperous city is always identical with a section of great natural resources, and nowhere in this country is this truth more clearly demonstrated than it is in the case of Birmingham and the Birmingham District. In fact, so closely identical are these two, that it is impossible to describe the one without speaking of the other.

The history of the city of Birmingham, its magical growth from a village to a great industrial city of 140,000 people, is the history of the development of the marvelous resources of its district, a district where-

in, and tributary to it, are coalfields estimated by geologists as bearing 68,000 million tons, and known iron ore deposits, which will supply all the furnaces now in blast in the district for a period of 360 years. As the district is now producing two million tons of pig iron and 700,000 tons of steel annually one may get an idea of the magnitude of the mineral resources of the Birmingham District and the great future in store for it, the more so when it is considered, that the total known ore-supply of other regions in the United States is estimated to be exhausted within the next fifty years.

Yet these great deposits of iron ore and coal do not represent the entire mineral resources of the district. Within its borders, associated with the ore deposits and coal measures and in separate layers are found immense quantities of lime-

stones, sandstones, clays, dolomite and marble. The limestone, besides its other uses furnishes the important material for fluxes in the iron furnaces and the others yielding the material for the manufacture of building stones, bricks, lime, cement and pottery.

The term "Birmingham District," as herein used applies to the immediate industrial district, in Jefferson County of which Birmingham is the center, not only by location, but industrially and commercially as well.

For while many of the iron furnaces, steel mills, rolling mills and other industrial plants and of course all the coal and ore mines of the district are outside the city limits, the great corporations operating these mines and plants have their headquarters in the city; and the 50,000 men employed in the district spend most of their wages, amounting to



THREE OF THE BUSINESS STREETS OF BIRMINGHAM

\$4,000,000 monthly, in the shops and business houses of Birmingham.

Birmingham Proper

Birmingham, the city proper, has rapidly expanded during the last few years, until now it covers an area of 48 square miles. At the same time it has fully responded to the demands of its environments and moulded itself into a metropolis able to fill any requirements which its growing industries and commercial importance may exact besides offering all the advantages which are expected of a modern progressive city.

It is a city of beautiful streets. There are a number of residential sections which for originality and beauty of architecture vie with the best in the land, and the principal avenue of which has the reputation of being the most beautiful thoroughfare of any city in the South.

Fifty-six miles of its streets are paved, and large appropriations have been made for further improvements in that direction. The main highways are straight as an arrow and of unusual width.

Birmingham is one of the most healthful cities of the country. Favored by an unsurpassed climate, and located upon an elevation ranging from 700 to 1,000 feet it has added to these natural advantages, one of the finest drainage and sewerage systems in the country covering practically the entire county; and an inexhaustible water supply adequate for a city of 1,000,000 population, the water being filtered and unsurpassed as to purity by that of any other city.

Birmingham is a city of home owners. As an evidence of its growth it can be cited that more than 20,000 homes have been built within the city limits since the census of 1900. While many of these residences can be called pretentious, a vast number of them have been erected as comfortable modern homes for those of moderate means.

The business section of the city has also been shaping itself to keep pace with the commercial and industrial growth, and the improvements in this respect are truly most wonderful. In the past six years seven steel construction office buildings, from ten to sixteen stories in height, have been erected, one of which is the largest building of its kind in the South.

Besides these, a large and handsome terminal station has recently been completed at a cost of \$2,000,000 to

dries, cement plants, a cotton mill, fertilizer plants and a great number of diversified industries.

The latter include such factories as automobile, cracker and candy, coffin, carriage and buggy, furniture, harness, mattresses, sash door and blinds, sewer pipe, gins, soil pipe, brick, etc.

To finance its extensive industrial and commercial enterprises and to supply the means for the conversion of the natural wealth of the district into marketable products, Birmingham

has nineteen banks with a total capital and surplus of \$3,130,000 and deposits amounting to \$20,000,000.

While the commercial interests of the city and district are not as great as the industrial, they are quite extensive and constantly growing. Its wholesale and jobbing trade amounts to \$60,000,000 per annum.

Birmingham is also the center of the lumber trade in Alabama. It is the second largest market in the country for yellow pine. While the growing of cotton is not carried on upon an extensive scale in Jefferson County, yet 125,000 bales of that staple commodity are handled annually in the Birmingham market.

It is self evident that a city with such large industrial and commercial interests is not lacking in great stores. The retail trade of Birmingham excels in volume of business and in the number of handsome

stores that of any southern city; among the latter being the largest department store south of the Ohio River.

A city's growth and development would be incomplete and lacking in essential points, were it only of a material character. Birmingham rushing forward with tremendous strides to the front ranks of American cities, has not neglected the spiritual and intellectual welfare of its fast growing population. Over 100 churches of all denominations, 66 public schools,



RESIDENCE STREETS, BIRMINGHAM

accommodate the ever-increasing passenger traffic of the nine trunk railroads entering the city, a list of which will be found in another article in this publication.

While coal, iron and steel represent a major portion of the industrial interests in the city and district, they by no means monopolize the industries. To begin with, Birmingham leads in the manufacture of cast iron pipe and heavy machinery. Within the city limits there are large iron pipe works, machine shops and found-



Darley Building



Empire Building



Brown Marx Building



Chamber of Commerce Building



Fiske Chamber of Commerce Building



Woodward Building



1st National Bank Building

five of them high schools, eight private schools and nine colleges including medical, dental, and business colleges and four public libraries are an eloquent and living proof to the city's progressive spirit of education and uplift.

Nor has Birmingham in its triumphal march to industrial and commercial greatness forgotten the care of her sick and helpless. It has two large public hospitals, a number of private sanitariums, two orphan asylums, and various other charitable institutions to care for the aged and infirm.

The population of Birmingham and its district is cosmopolitan, including a great number of Europeans and people from almost every state in the Union. It naturally follows that Birmingham is a cosmopolitan city in all its aspects, chiefly amongst which are its places of amusements and its social life.

Five big theaters and a number of smaller show places cater to the play and music-loving public. Eight parks, one of them a large amusement park, provide recreation, entertainment and healthy exercise to young and old.

The social side of the community is well represented by a score of clubs, four of which have handsome homes, and by many social and fraternal associations; amongst them are several German and Italian societies.

This birdseye view of Alabama's metropolis—a metropolis in the broadest sense—would not be complete without mentioning its splendid civic institutions for the protection of its citizens, its excellent newspapers and its great public utility system of street railways, light and power facilities, with its 133 miles of track, reaching in every direction and knitting city and district within a radius of fifteen miles so closely together, as to make them almost one. The potency of this factor in the development of this city and district will be better

realized when it is cited that within the territory and along the lines traversed by the Street Railway, comprising about 100 square miles, there are located eighty large plants, exclusive of those which are located in the central part of the city, and

daily capacity of 250 tons at North Birmingham; the Birmingham Machine & Foundry Company, manufacturers of heavy machinery; the Hardie-Tynes Manufacturing Company and many of the iron furnaces and rolling mills of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, the Sloss-Sheffield Co. and the Republic Iron and Steel Company.

Agricultural Opportunities of the District and County

As pointed out elsewhere in this publication, the growth and development of the Birmingham District and Jefferson County have been entirely on industrial lines. In this respect the history of this section during the last twenty-five years does not differ materially from that of the whole South. The pioneers who during the last quarter of a century built up an empire in the North and West, were the tillers of the soil; the builders of the new South were the men of commerce and industry. Of the

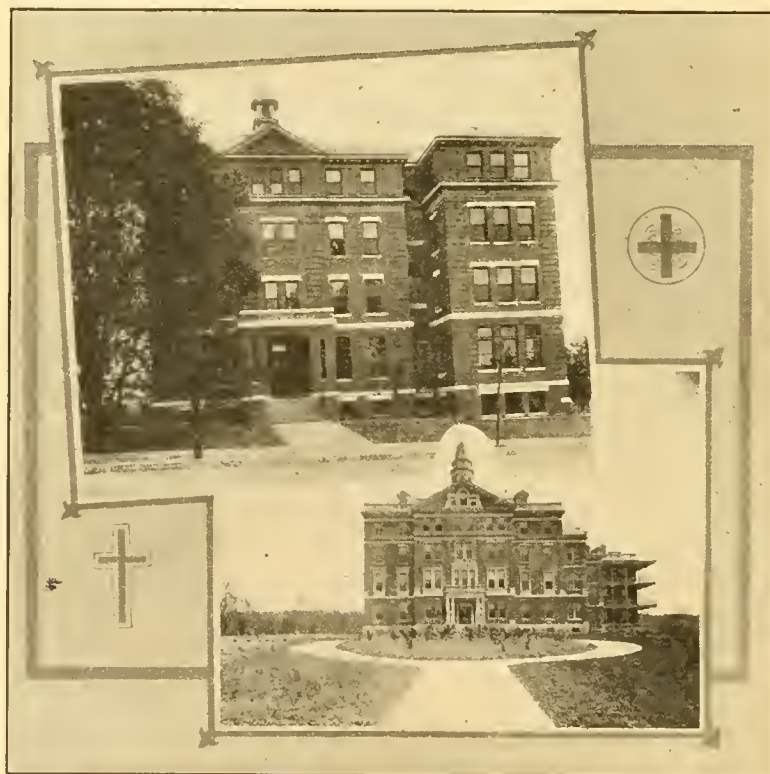
great stream of homeseekers from the East and Europe, the South received but a small share and therefore was far outstripped in agricultural development by sections which can not compare with the South's marvelous resources—her millions of acres of fertile lands, her unlimited water power, her unsurpassed climate and her mineral wealth.

Many causes can be assigned for this lack of agricultural development in the South, which so strongly contrasts with the wonderful and rapid growth of her industrial and commercial interests. One cause however, stands out pre-eminently: the South has never made any strong efforts to in-

crease her agricultural population. She has been too busy building cities and railroads and factories and expanding her commercial interests, to come to a realization of her matchless agricultural opportunities, and she contented herself to spend 75 per cent



CITY HALL BUILDING, BIRMINGHAM



HILLMAN AND ST. VINCENT HOSPITALS, BIRMINGHAM

fifty-one coal and ore mines, all together employing 40,000 men. Among the plants are the immense steel mill with a capacity of 2,000 tons per day of the Tennessee Coal, Iron & Railroad Company at Ensley; the Dimmick Pipe Works with a

of the money produced by cotton, her great staple, abroad for foodstuffs, all of which and more could be raised within her own kingly realm. Recently, however, the awakening came, as it was bound to come, hastened perhaps by the present high cost of living and the ever-increasing scarcity of efficient white labor in the southern field—a condition which is perhaps more acutely felt in industrial centers like the Birmingham District than in other portions of the South, and which can only be gradually remedied by a substantial influx of settlers.

Of all the sections in the South today inviting the home-seeker and settler, there is none which possess such a rare combination of favorable conditions towards every kind of agricultural pursuit, than Jefferson County, Alabama. Fertile lands and mild climate are found in every section of the South, but none has the prerequisite to agricultural development in such a high degree as Jefferson County—a large and ever-increasing home market for all products of the farm and garden.



A GROUP OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS, BIRMINGHAM
High School at Bottom

Wages Paid in the District

Birmingham and its district consumes more than five million dollars worth of foodstuffs annually, not

including meats, most of which are shipped in from other sections of this country. Thousands of carloads of hay and grain are also brought in each year from the western states. This enormous amount of consumption of farm products is due largely to the great number of laboring men—skilled and common labor—employed in the Birmingham District, all of whom receive the highest scale of wages paid anywhere in this country and who are consequently able to buy, and do buy, plenty of good food. As an example of the scale of wages prevalent in the district, it will not be amiss to mention here, that coal miners are paid 52 1-2 cents per ton for pick mining and 31 cents for machine mining, based upon a four foot seam; furnace men receive from \$2.50 to \$7.00 per day; machinists from 20 to 37 cents per hour, and helpers in furnaces, pipe works, miners, etc., from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day. And large as the number of men now employed in the district is, a great many more are needed. Various new industries are constructing extensive plants, which, when finished, will employ an additional 5,000 men. A model industrial town, adjoining the city limits of Birmingham is being built at a cost of \$1,500,000, and the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, the largest industrial factor in the district, recently appropriated \$7,000,000 to be expended immediately in the construction of new plants and the general development of its immense properties in the



A GROUP OF CHURCHES IN BIRMINGHAM

district.

The great industries of the Birmingham District with its thousands of laboring men not only constitute the major part of the large home market for foodstuffs, but they greatly add in other ways to the value of the agricultural opportunities of the county. As a matter of fact, the industries and the thousands of acres of fertile lands around and near Birmingham, supplement each other and create a field for the homeseeker, the equal of which no other section in the South can offer. The homeseeker coming here for the purpose of cultivating lands, or the man of family coming here with the view of working in our industries can, if he chooses, together with his family, do both—cultivate land and work in our industries. This is made possible by the close proximity of the lands to the industrial plants and mines in the District.

Lands for Rent

Near the city and stretching over ten miles in every direction 200,000 acres of land are waiting to be converted into farms, gardens, orchards and pastures. A great deal of this land is cleared and will give the settler very little trouble to put in shape for cultivation. Its topography, its wide range of soil, its fertility are all fully discussed in other articles of this publication and need not therefore be dwelled upon here.

The bulk of this land is owned by the great coal and iron companies of the district. Some of the companies, realizing the great importance of a

movement to bring a good class of settlers to this section, offer to rent their land for \$1.00 an acre per annum, give a five years lease and build a home for each family free of cost.

The value of this offer will be better understood and appreciated, when it is considered that the land under discussion being near and within easy reach of a large city with an almost unlimited market for its product would in any middle or western state be worth from \$150 to \$300 an acre.

The man with limited means—who possesses but a few hundred dollars to start with—will not find such an exceptional opportunity in any other section of the South and, it is perhaps not too much to claim, not in any part of this country; in fact, the farmer or gardener who comes here and leases from ten to forty acres of land and who does not make enough money in five years to buy a good farm is not the man we want to settle here.

Lands for Sale

Jefferson County, as stated elsewhere, contains 719,360 acres. According to the United States soil survey of the county only 24,640 acres of them are not adaptable to cultivation. They are designated as 24,320 acres of rough stony land and 320 acres rock outcrop. Of the remaining 694,720 acres the United States soil survey speaks in the highest terms of being adaptable to the profitable growing of every variety of garden truck and domestic fruits—such as strawberries, peaches, apples,

plums and grapes—grain and all the standard forage crops. Of this great area of productive land only about 150,000 acres are improved, the main crop being cotton and corn and not all of them are at present under cultivation, due to the fact that many of the native farmers, owning lands, but lacking the essential qualities of a good farmer or gardener, have left their farms and have gone to the city. For this reason quite a number of improved farms are for sale at low prices. The country is traversed by over 1,100 miles of wagon roads, 220 miles of which are macadamized. Besides these public roads the county is practically covered, as will be seen by the map on the back of this publication by a net work of railroads, so that almost every region of the county is easily accessible to local markets and shipping points.

Notwithstanding all these favorable conditions for agricultural pursuits—advantageous location, great fertility of soil, splendid market facilities and high prices for farm products—lands in the county can be bought for \$5.00 to \$50.00 an acre.

The price of these lands bears no just proportion to their real intrinsic value, as a comparison of them with the price of lands and their crop value in the North and West will easily prove. For instance, in Illinois the average land value is \$38.65 per acre, the average crop value being \$7.81. In Indiana the average land value per acre is \$45.66, the average crop value \$8.23. In Iowa the average land value per acre is \$23.52, the average crop value



NEW TWO MILLION DOLLAR TERMINAL STATION, BIRMINGHAM



SCENE AT EAST LAKE, BIRMINGHAM'S BIGGEST AMUSEMENT PARK

\$6.75. According to these statistics, it is a fair estimate to say that for instance in Illinois it would take the proceeds of five to eight years to pay for a farm of twenty acres, while here, according to the United States Soil Survey of Jefferson County, Alabama, it is not unusual for a farmer to buy land and sell enough truck to pay for it in from one to three years.

Dairying and Hog Raising

In summing up the unsurpassed agricultural opportunities offered to the homeseeker in the Birmingham District and Jefferson County, a few things in regard to two important branches of agriculture, the raising of hogs and the dairying industry might be of some interest to homeseekers.

In Jefferson County and, for that matter, in the entire South a greater variety of forage plants can be produced, than in the North; two and often three crops per year can be raised. Early fall planting of rye, oats, hairy vetch or bur clover will provide excellent winter pasture, and give a decided advantage for the feeding of cows over the North, where cows in the winter, instead of pasturing in the open air, have to be housed in warm buildings and fed upon ground feed and dry hay.

Milk sells in Birmingham at 25 cents a gallon wholesale or ten cents a quart retail the year around. What a dairy man can do here is very aptly answered by Prof. Alford, Chief of the Dairy Division, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in an article upon Dairying in the Southern States. Prof. Alford, of course, does not refer to any one section, but what he says exactly describes conditions and what

locality has some sort of milk supply already, the business is, as a rule, very unsystematically and insufficiently done. There are in the South hundreds of places, if not thousands, where the supply is unsatisfactory in quality and uncertain and irregular in quantity. The whole service is susceptible of very great improvements, and it is morally certain that a rich reward awaits the man or men who will intelligently and energetically occupy this field and really satisfy the wants of the community.

"The greatest profit will accrue to those who go at once to the top and aim to secure the cream of the trade by adopting the most approved methods, and offering consumers, at fair prices, better milk than they have previously been able to procure, uniform in its high quality, safe because pure, delivered in attractive form and in condition to insure good keeping properties. The large cities and towns offer the promise of healthy growth and the steady increase of a population obliged to buy its food supply and with money to pay for it. A

a dairyman can do in the Birmingham District.

He says, among other things: "The branch of dairying which offers the most immediate and surest profit, in the Southern States, is undoubtedly that of producing milk for the supply of nearby cities and towns. Although almost every

man who will locate within easy reach of such a town and make market milk, prepare it and sell it, according to the best modern methods, is about as sure of success as in any line of agricultural effort anywhere in this country.

"There are, besides, many places, both large and small, where by moderate effort and without any radical change of system, the local milk supply can be vastly improved and consumption greatly increased, by simply making this business a specialty, offering good, clean milk, regularly and well delivered."

In regard to Hog-raising the opinion of an expert may again be quoted, which reads as follows:—

"Some of the more important reasons why swine husbandry should prove especially attractive to Southern farmers are summed up in the following paragraph: First, there is a mild climate so that the hogs require but little housing. There are springs and running streams of water everywhere, a splendid natural range and an abundance of mast in the large forest areas still existing in the states. Corn and other cereals so commonly and successfully used in the production of pork are easily and cheaply produced, and a variety of forage crops, including the clovers and many other legumes, thrive remarkably well. Rape, the plant which has been successfully used for hog production throughout the Northern States, but whose qualities we are only beginning to appreciate, takes kindly to our soil and climate. Red clover finds in our red clays a natural heritage. Sorghum, soja beans, hairy



STREET SCENES AT ENSLEY, A PART OF BIRMINGHAM

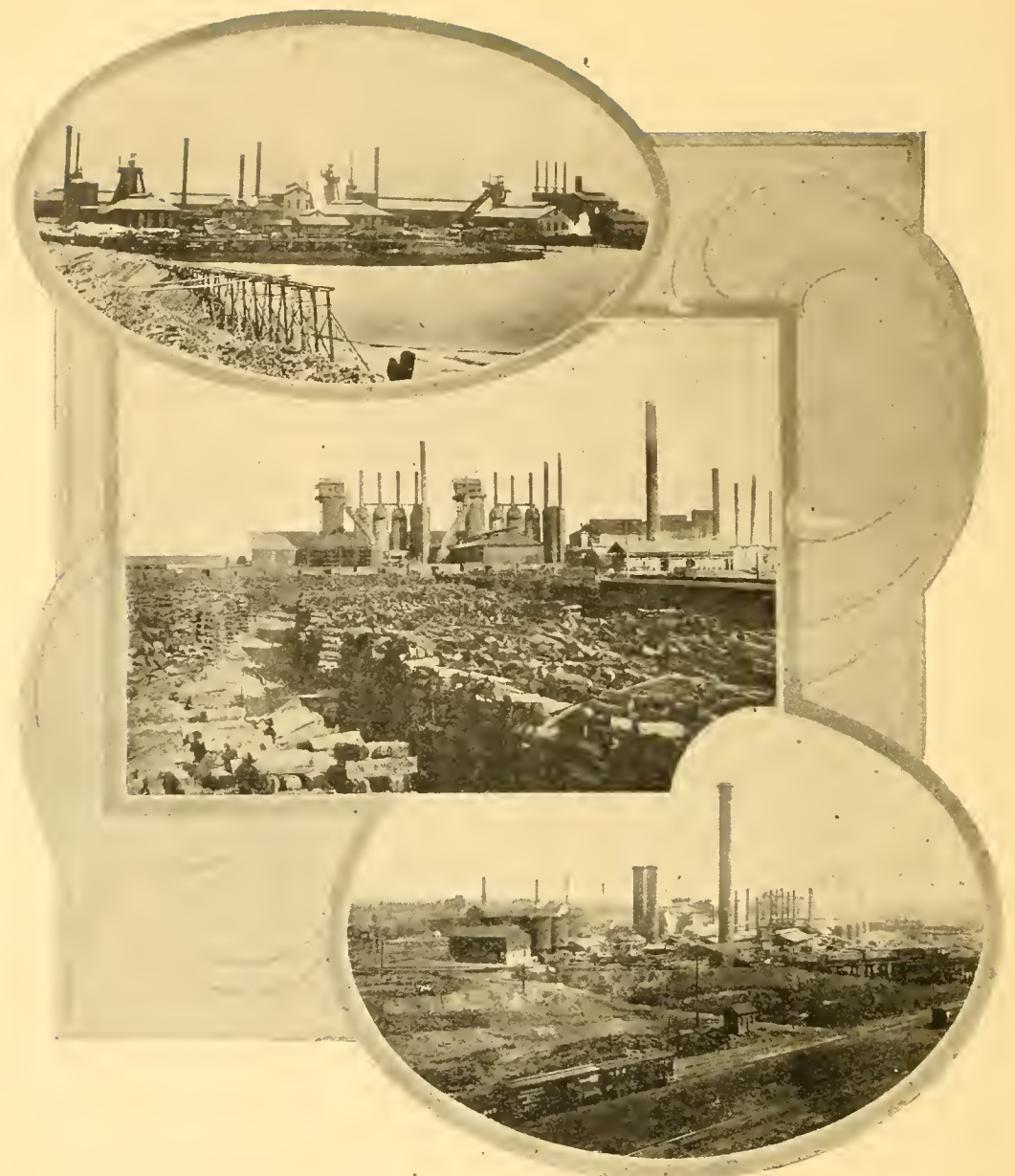
vetch, artichokes, the velvet bean, the cow pea and Spanish peanuts all thrive well singly and some of them in combinations, producing as rich and fine mixtures for hog pastures as can be produced anywhere.

"At the present time the South is paying a heavy tribute to the farmers of the Central West for hog products, and this in the face of the finest natural environment for pork production, in spite of the possession of a splendid home market and the ability to produce the highest quality of pork at a very low cost. Surely the outlook for the development of swine husbandry in the South is very bright. The population of the United States, in round numbers is 76,500,000 and rapidly increasing. The market for pork products at home and abroad never was better than it is today. There is less than one hog held on the farms for each citizen, and especially is it true of the South. The Southern farmer ought to supply his home markets with their meat; he ought to have more hogs to sell, and keep at home the millions of dollars now annually sent North for hog products."

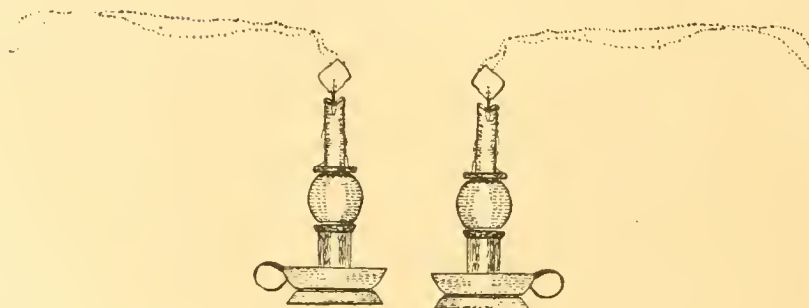
Jefferson County has the climate and the springs and running streams of water. It has the home market

and the forests and the soils which will easily produce abundance of cereals and forage—it has everything but sufficient men to develop the

bountiful natural resources with which it is endowed and to help to get these is the purpose of this article and this publication.



A GROUP OF FURNACES IN BIRMINGHAM





STREET SCENES AT BESSEMER, ALA.

Bessemer is a growing city with 12,000 population, located a few miles from the city limits of Birmingham. It is closely connected with the latter by various electric and steam railroads and the territory between the two cities is so thickly populated as to form almost one. In Bessemer are located a number of large furnaces and other industrial plants and a great many business houses.



STEEL MILL OF THE T. C. I. & R. R. CO. AT ENSLEY, DAILY CAPACITY
2000 TONS, EMPLOYS 3500 MEN



BIRDS-EYE VIEW OF DIMMICKS PIPE WORKS, BIRMINGHAM. EMPLOYS 800 MEN.
DAILY CAPACITY 250 TONS



SCENES FROM A GROUP OF MINES IN THE BIRMINGHAM
DISTRICT



WM. LEHMAN

The Climate of Birmingham and Vicinity

BY WM. LEHMAN, LOCAL OFFICIAL U. S. WEATHER BUREAU
BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

This article was written upon the request of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce to be used in a publication issued by them for the purpose of inducing thrifty people, especially those following agricultural and horticultural pursuits to settle upon the vacant lands in the Birmingham District and Jefferson County. It is obvious that an article upon climatic conditions, written by an official of the U. S. Weather Bureau, must be based upon facts. He is responsible to his department for every word he writes. Fortunately a treatise on the climate of Birmingham and vicinity is an easy and agreeable task, as it will, in its essential points, be merely a repetition and confirmation of what has been published about it before. The superiority of the climate in this region has never been exaggerated. Railroad, commercial and other associations, however, in advertising this section, have always limited themselves in regard to climate to simply showing official tables of temperature and rainfall. These tables while conveying a clear idea to the homeseeker of the mild weather and even temperature prevailing in this section, yet do not give sufficient information to the man coming here for the purpose of farming and gardening. It is not enough for him to know the normal weather conditions. The intelligent tiller of the soil in choosing a location must take into consideration the unusual and abnormal meteorological phenomena, as they are apt to appear in any region. He has to count with wind and hail storms, late frosts, droughts, or a strong and con-

tinuous rainfall, all of which will naturally have a big influence upon the failure or success of his crops.

Every intelligent person, of course, knows such meteorological disturbances make their appearance more or less in every section of this country and for that matter all over the world and it would be a false policy to claim an entire absence of them for this section. But these disturbances, with the exception of late frosts, happen here so seldom, and are of such light nature, that it is scarcely worth

the April and October temperature of the Northern frontier states. Freezing weather changes with mild temperature in proportion of three days of cold weather to six warm days. The monthly rainfall in winter is five inches, during an average of ten days in each month. Snow is almost unknown. March in this section corresponds with the month of May in the Northern States with a middling temperature of 56 degrees and a normal rainfall of 5.76 inches. Considerable less rain falls in April and

May, while the temperature rises to 63 and 73 degrees respectively.

From the foregoing it will readily be understood that the prevalent meteorological conditions during the winter months here are very favorable towards the maturing of a bountiful spring crop. The reader might ask however, "How about the tropical heat down there during the summer?" We can answer this question by saying that our summer is a season of great beauty; and we can remove all doubts of this assertion, by mentioning that roses are in bloom here yet, during the months of July

and August. Roses, as it is well known, need cool nights, and the summer nights in this section are delightfully cool. Experienced travelers, well acquainted with the climate and weather conditions as they exist in other states and sections of this country, will and frequently do select Birmingham as their choice for a summer residence in preference to large cities in the North, such as Pittsburgh, New York and Chicago.

The intermediate temperature rises from 75 degrees in the beginning of



FARM HOUSES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

while to mention them. Losses through wind or hail-storms are almost unknown here. Late frosts in March or in the first half of April happen oftener. In spite of the latter fact, however, very few of the native farmers think it necessary to provide against such frosts as they do in the North and West as the losses accruing from them are proportionally small in most instances. The average temperature of the short winters from December to February is 47 degrees, therefore is a little higher yet than

June to 81 degrees at the end of July and then falls again to 75 degrees by the middle of September. Rains during this season are merely thunder-showers of short duration, which flow off quickly and moisten the air just enough to preserve plant-life without causing any inconvenience to men or animals. Summer is followed by a

mild, pleasant, sunshiny fall with occasional warm showers, lasting until the beginning of December. Now and then there are light frosts as early as October; but snow or hail in the fall are absolutely unknown here.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the climate of Birmingham and vicinity is pre-eminently suited for

and very favorable toward every kind of agricultural pursuits. Those of our readers who desire further and more detailed information about the climate and conditions of this section, such as statistical tables, etc., may address the Local Office U. S., Weather Bureau, Birmingham, Ala.



FIELD OF PEAS

These peas were raised by children in the Birmingham District, who are encouraged in their endeavors with prizes for the best products of peas, corn, etc., by prominent business men.





COUNTRY ROAD LEADING INTO BIRMINGHAM



G. B. McVAY

Agricultural and Horticultural Possibilities in Jefferson County, Ala., Including the Birmingham District

BY G. B. McVAY

Birmingham is noted for its mining and manufacturing industries, iron and steel making and a great many other industries consuming iron and steel but the possibilities of development along the lines of Agriculture and Horticulture have not been appreciated. It must be plain to anyone that not only the greater City of Birmingham, but the entire county, will be inhabited by an enormous population in the near future. The most conservative citizen will place the population of Jefferson County at half a million people by 1920.

Now it follows that such a community and class of population must be large consumers of farm products of every character. It must be admitted that in the past but little attention has been paid to Agriculture in Jefferson County. But since the enormous amount of farm products consumed daily in Greater Birmingham and distributed throughout the district, is now known and estimated at fifteen thousand (\$15,000.00) dollars a day (which the writer thinks too low) enterprising men have begun to wake up and see if these products cannot be produced in Jefferson County instead of being shipped in from long distances as is the case at present. It is popular belief that since Jefferson County is in fact a hilly and rather rugged country that

little opportunity exists for agricultural development and it is the purpose of this short article to relate not only what is being done in a farming way, but call attention to what is possible through rational management of the soils of this county.

SOILS.—It is probably not incorrect to say that Jefferson County contains within its boundaries and in close proximity to Birmingham a wider range or more different and distinct classes of soil than any county

methods of treatment of the different soils to bring them into a high state of cultivation because it would lead to confusion as so much depends on the class of crops to be undertaken. But it is enough to say that our soils are naturally rich in a number of mineral elements so essential to the proper development of plant life. The most important of these salts is potash, in which the red lands are especially prolific. The deficiency where it exists at all is usually con-

fined to the phosphates, nitrogen and their compounds. These deficiencies are easily remedied through the application of barnyard manure, commercial fertilizers, deep cultivation, rotation of crops and through the use of soil renovating plants such as cow peas, clovers, vetches and other leguminous plants.

TOPOGRAPHY.—Much has been said about the



FIELD OF NAVY BEANS ON TRUCK FARM IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

in the South. The predominant soil, however, may be said to be what is known as red lands, although there is plenty sandy lands, chocolate loams, sandy loams, grey loams, and a great quantity of a complex character not easily defined. Most of these soils are under-laid with a porous red clay giving them a good foundation, thus rendering them capable of high development under proper management. I will not attempt to discuss the most rational

hills, mountains and rugged character of Jefferson County. And one who passes through the county by railroad is easily led into the error in assuming that the area of tilable land is small. As a matter of fact the amount of untilable land is very small when compared to the total acreage of the county. Broadly speaking, Jefferson County is made up of a series of hills or high plateaus and beautiful fertile valleys. These valleys range in width from a half



TRUCK FARM OF FRITZ BOCK IN ONE OF THE SUBURBS OF BIRMINGHAM

mile to five miles or more. Most of the farming is carried on in these valleys although some of the most fertile lands are on the high table lands, a great deal of which is in cultivation and furnishes no small percent of the county's farm products. These facts as to soil and physical conditions are given to correct possible error in forming hasty conclusions. This subject should not be left without calling the attention of prospective settlers to the splendid public roads already in service and those being built.

And another thing of great importance is the fact that the county is abundantly watered by numerous

celled railroad facilities ought to distribute a large surplus to Northern markets.

BEANS.—Boston is not the only city that consumes beans. Taking into consideration the size of the two cities it is safe to say that Birmingham is as far ahead of her as the modern aeroplane is ahead of the old hot air balloon. It cannot be said, of course, that all commercial beans can be produced as cheap here as in some other states or as profitable but owing to the enormous local consumption and high freight rates the growth of all varieties is well worth trying. What the writer knows to be profitable is

be harvested within forty to fifty-five days after planting and that a succession of plantings may be made around Birmingham up to the first of October. It can be seen from this, the possible profits from an acre in beans during a single season. Another profitable bean is the small lima or butter bean, both the dwarf and pole. These planted in the proper rotation produce money-paying crops until November frosts. The large commercial limas are not grown with any considerable profit.

CABBAGE.—Cabbage is pretty generally considered the truck farmers' main money crop and the average



FARM IN SHADES VALLEY NEAR BIRMINGHAM

streams and no end of great springs. In fact, there is scarcely a farm of any size in the County that does not contain one or more excellent springs.

VEGETABLE PRODUCE.—It would not be an untruth to say that Jefferson County affords every class of soil for the profitable production of all classes of farm products but it is the purpose of the writer only to point out the most profitable, taking into due consideration the advantages of the best home market for produce in the South. This County not only ought to produce a sufficient quantity of vegetables for its home market, but with its unex-

what is commonly called snap beans. The green podded sorts, both dwarf and pole, are in greatest demand. Some of our best gardeners report yields on good soil of one hundred to two hundred bushels of green pods to the acre. The price, of course, varies widely but it is probably safe to put down the average in a season at seventy-five cents per bushel. Now all this crop is marketed locally so there is no expense for crates or packing for shipment. No uncertainties usually attending shipments by express or freight to commission houses, etc. It should be borne in mind, too, that a crop of beans may

citizen has but a remote idea of the enormous consumption. The greatest demand lies with the laboring classes, both skilled and unskilled, consequently Birmingham with its thousands of workmen consume a hundred times more cabbage annually than is produced in her district. Notwithstanding this, there is generally a period in early spring when the market is glutted with cabbage and oddly enough some few cars are shipped away and mostly to New Orleans. Of course, cabbage being a perishable vegetable, it is not possible for any one section to supply its own wants the year around, except



CORNFIELD ON R. N. BELL'S FARM, FULTON SPRINGS NEAR BIRMINGHAM

through the use of cold storage. But if our truckers would plant at proper intervals crops could be harvested from April to December. The writer has seen the cabbage at its best in a number of southern and northern states but has never seen better crops than is produced on the red lands of Jefferson County. W. T. Burrows, formerly of Louisville, Ky., and Cincinnati, Ohio, a local truck farmer, makes a specialty of cabbage and his crops have averaged him the past few years two hundred and fifty dollars per acre. Some extra good crops have been sold by him for as much as five hundred dollars per acre. Others can do as well when they have had the experience and become acquainted with the proper knowledge when to sow the seed, the proper management of the plants and how to feed the crop to obtain the greatest yield.

ONIONS.—

But few dry commercial onions are grown in the Birmingham district. The consumption, of course, is large. To be sure a great many onions are planted but mostly in the shape of sets. This crop is not allowed to mature, but are pulled up when almost grown, bunched and marketed when green. That there must be a good profit in it is evident by the increasing acreage every year. To grow good dry commercial onions it is necessary to plant seed instead of sets. This involves a great deal more time, work and pains to produce a merchantable crop. Sooner or later some one will take up the growth of matured commercial onions on a large scale, as experiments already conducted on a small scale show that plenty of soils exist capable of producing two hundred and fifty to four hundred bushels to the acre. Taking seventy-five cents per bushel in the local market as a low average price it can be seen that the business will prove most profitable.

POTATOES.—Greater Birmingham spends every day in the week almost a small fortune for potatoes alone. This includes sweet potatoes

as well as white or Irish potatoes, and it is really a reflection on our farmers to say that probably more than ninety per cent of this money is sent away to line the pockets of farmers far away. These conditions ought not to obtain, because it is absurd that we must rely on Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Virginia and Kentucky for the bulk of our sweet potatoes when they can and should be grown in Jefferson County. It is nonsense to assert that our soils are not adapted to sweet potatoes because a considerable acreage is planted every year with splendid yields. The trouble is, the acreage is trifling compared to the needs of the community. Farmers seem to be satisfied with a little patch mostly for their own use and seem to overlook the fact that a

but in July and August for fall crop but it is probably safe to say that less than five per cent of the potatoes consumed in Jefferson County is locally grown. This county possessing a wide range of soils as has been pointed out, should produce at least one-half of the potatoes that the Birmingham market needs. The yield possibly cannot be said to equal certain sections in the west or east, but one should remember that the local grower has a difference in his favor of from twenty-five to thirty cents per bushel, account of freight charges, that must be paid by the public on every car of potatoes shipped into Birmingham. It requires good soil to produce potatoes profitably in this county and the yield on good soil is al-

most the same that is expected or gotten in the north-west. The writer has seen crops of potatoes harvested in Jefferson County that would run on an average one hundred and fifty to two hundred bushels to the acre. Even greater yields are not impossible and when you take into account the fact that there is an unlimited demand locally it can be easily seen that there is unquestionably much profit in growing potatoes for



SNAP BEAN FIELD ON MR. JACKSON'S TRUCK FARM, JEFFERSON COUNTY

wagon load of potatoes can be sold as readily as a bale of cotton or a coop of chickens and with decidedly more net profit. There are plenty of soils in Jefferson County without even the aid of fertilizers that will produce one hundred and fifty bushels of sweet potatoes to the acre. The average price of yams in the local market will easily average year around seventy-five cents per bushel. It is easy to see from this that probably no other crop would afford the same net revenue per acre. It should be borne in mind also that sweet potatoes can be planted in our climate as late as June, after a crop of cabbage or white potatoes has been harvested.

Birmingham is a large consumer of white potatoes commonly called Irish potatoes, and a considerable acreage is planted not only in early spring

the Birmingham market. In estimating the possible profits in growing potatoes in this section one should not lose sight of the fact that two crops a season are easily made so that where a short crop might occur sometime one has two chances to make a profit showing on the same piece of ground. The early or spring crop is generally planted in February and is usually ready to harvest in June. Fall crops of potatoes are planted in July and August and are generally harvested about the first to middle of November.

ENGLISH OR GARDEN PEAS

A considerable acreage of garden peas are planted in the Birmingham district, but it is a well known fact that probably eighty to ninety per



FIELD OF BERMUDA ONIONS ON A TRUCK FARM NEAR BIRMINGHAM

cent of the peas consumed in this market are shipped into Birmingham from distant points. A careful investigation covering a period of three years has developed the fact that the average price of garden peas has been close around one dollar per bushel. To be accurate, statistics will show that the price has been ninety-four cents per bushel. A careful investigation of the yield has proven that local growers have averaged one hundred and twenty-five bushel hampers to the acre. Now when it is figured that the crop of garden peas is harvested in about eight weeks time, the profit in growing such a crop for this market is thoroughly apparent.

LETTUCE.—But few farmers appreciate the possibilities of profit-showing in the production of one acre of lettuce. Figuring the average distance twenty thousand plants to the acre is possible. If the crop is properly grown and well fertilized it is not unreasonable to expect as much as $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents per head—this gives an income of \$500.00 off of an acre and when you figure that the crop is marketed within ninety days after the plant is put out the profit is easily figured. There is almost an unlimited demand for such crops as lettuce in Greater Birmingham, and it is really a reflection on the farmers of Jefferson County that possibly eighty per cent of the lettuce consumed in this district is shipped into Birmingham by express from distant points.

TOMATOES.—There are three specialists in Jefferson County who are making good profits out of the production of tomatoes for the Birmingham market. The writer has investigated methods employed by these tomato men and finds that they are getting an income of from \$175.00 to \$250.00 per acre and this on land that they are renting for \$5.00 per acre per annum. In fact, they are getting a revenue off each acre of land cultivated per annum a sufficient amount of money to buy the land. It is not possible in this article to dwell on their methods of cultivation, but it is sufficient to say that those who are devoting their time to the culture of the tomato are reaping splendid profits from their efforts.

MELONS.—Jefferson County contains almost one hundred thousand negroes and it is a well known fact that they are the largest consumers of melons of any other class of people. Con-

sequently, the demand on the Birmingham market for all classes of melons is practically unlimited. Jefferson County could easily produce her own melons but it is a well known fact that practically all the melons consumed in the Birmingham district are shipped in here by carload lots from far distant points. The early markets are generally supplied from Florida points. The demand in September and even as late as October is supplied by northern states. The climate in the Birmingham district is such that if melons were planted in succession they could be had from early spring until the latter part of October. A melon crop is usually grown with very little expense and those who are giving their attention to the production of melons in the Birmingham district are reaping splendid profits. Reference is made here not only to watermelons

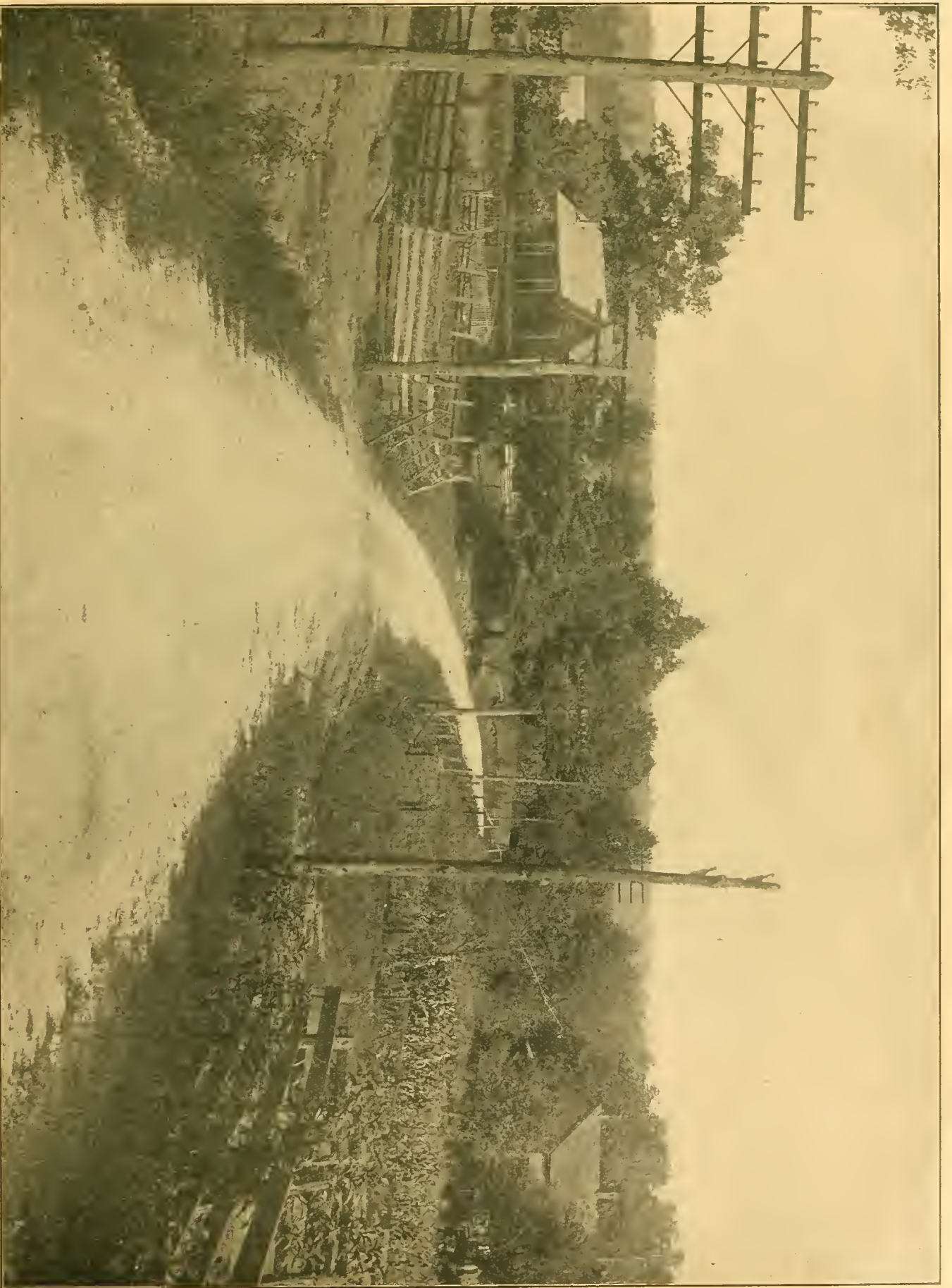
but cantaloupes as well, and the writer must say that for quality no section of the United States produces better cantaloupes than the red hills of Jefferson County.

MISCELLANEOUS GARDEN TRUCK.—It is not possible in this short article to go into detail about every different class of crop that can be grown in Jefferson County profitably, but a few will be mentioned here that are being grown and at considerable profit. The main trouble is that they are not grown in such quantities as the local market demands. There is almost an unlimited demand for what is known as greens, including such vegetables as collards, spinach, kale, mustard, rape and turnips. These are quick growing crops, meet with ready sale and are grown with considerable profit.

These crops, of course, should be grown in connection with others so that one is able to take care of the demand for this particular class of crops. As an illustration of what might be done with this class of crops the writer knows of a truck farmer who sold \$1,270.00 worth of spinach last fall or winter from five acres of ground. Most anyone can repeat the same thing year in and year out. Another very profitable crop that is grown locally is okra, and it is probably one of the most profitable minor crops that is grown in Jefferson County. The demand is practically unlimited and as the growing period extends from June until the middle of November, it is easily seen that the opportunity with this particular crop should not be overlooked. There is a splendid local demand for such crops as radishes, beets, squash, carrot, cucumbers, arsnipps and pepper. And while these crops are grown very successfully in a small way the majority of such vegetables are shipped into Birmingham in car load or mixed carload lots from distant points. A careful investigation of the needs and the enormous consumption in the Birmingham District of all classes of farm products would lead any investigator to the conclusion that the business of growing produce for the Birmingham market would afford a fine return for the effort and money invested.



CABBAGE FIELD ON TRUCK FARM IN JEFFERSON COUNTY



FARM SCENE IN JEFFERSON COUNTY



O. L. AYRS

Agricultural Conditions and Possibilities in The Birmingham District

BY O. L. AYRS

The Birmingham District is known chiefly for its many mining and manufacturing industries. Because of the unprecedented natural advantages which the region offers these industries, all the activities have centered around them and little attention has been given to the agricultural possibilities. The country, however, possesses many advantages which should appeal to the farmer. The large population assembled here has created an exceptionally good market for all food products.

Thousands of carloads of hay and grain are shipped in from the Western States each year. The Northern States send in thousands of bushels of potatoes, and large quantities of poultry, eggs and meat are brought in from neighboring states. In fact the region does not furnish enough of any single commodity to meet its own needs. Hay, according to kind and quality, sells for \$14 to \$25 per ton, corn 75 cents to 90

cents per bushel, Irish potatoes 60 cents to \$1.00 per bushel, sweet potatoes 75 cents to \$1.25 per bushel, peaches 75 cents to \$2.00 per bushel, strawberries 8 cents to 15 cents per quart and other crops at corresponding prices.

Because of these facts the general impression has gone out that the soils are so poor that farming is not profitable here. This is incorrect. The region possesses a variety of soils, some of which are suitable for

almost every crop grown. The Birmingham District lies at the extreme Southern end of the Appalachian province, and many different geological formations are exposed here, each of which exerts a modifying influence upon the soil.

Birmingham lies in a broad limestone valley (Jones Valley) some thirty miles long. The soils here are mainly yellow to brown and red loams and clay loams. Like all limestone soils, these produce good yields of corn, hay

after from sandy loam to silt loam. These soils are not as strong as those in Jones Valley, but are more easily cultivated and produce fine yields of truck and garden crops. A portion of it lies quite low and is good grass land. Northwest of Birmingham the country consists of a series of rough broken ridges with deep narrow intervening valleys. These valleys, except for narrow areas at the bottom, are usually too rough for cultivation. The tops of the ridges consist of

nearly level areas one-eighth to one-fourth of a mile wide. The soil here is a fine sandy loam to loam. Good yields of fine Irish and sweet potatoes are produced. Strawberries and other small fruits do well, and melons and other truck crops are profitable.

The long seasons here make it possible to grow two crops per year on nearly all land. The rain fall is usually so distributed that no trouble is experienced from drought, except for a short time



SNAP BEAN FIELD ON TRUCK FARM, JEFFERSON COUNTY

and general farm crops when properly cultivated. Within the valley and along its sides, are many small gravelly and stony ridges. These produce fine peaches and other fruits.

Red Mountain lies to the Southeast of this valley. It is rich in iron and is one of the district's chief sources of wealth, but is of no agricultural importance. Beyond the mountain is a second broad valley. Here the soils are derived from shale and sandstone rock and vary in char-

acter in September or October.

A truck farm with a well selected rotation of crops can have produce to put on the market eight months out of the year. In the valley near Birmingham about one-half of the agricultural land is under cultivation. In other parts of the district less than one-fourth of the land available for agriculture is being made use of.

Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage and beans are among the more profitable crops at the pres-



TRUCK FARM OF M. F. MADDOX NEAR BIRMINGHAM

ent time. Many are beginning to plant small areas to these crops and there is a period of ten days to two weeks at the height of the season when the market is well supplied, but the successful grower who manages his crop so as to bring it on the market a few days ahead of the rush or better yet, two weeks later than the main crop, always finds a ready market.

Irish potatoes are planted from February 20th to May 1st. The earliest ones are ready for market June 15th. These may be followed by a second crop of potatoes, a crop of June corn, sweet potatoes, cow peas, or soy-beans. The yield of potatoes ranges from 80 to 175 bushels per acre. It is thought by many that the crop cannot be kept and an effort is made to rush them on the market at the earliest possible moment. This usually gluts the market for a short time. By planting the later varieties the careful grower can hold his crop back until after the rush is past and with the average season he can leave the mature potatoes in the ground four to eight weeks before digging. Potatoes may also be stored for several weeks by spreading them in thin layers in a dark well ventilated place. This can be done at a small expense

and a better price will be realized by selling the crop slightly out of season.

When a second crop is planted the seed is taken from the small potatoes of the first crop and planted during July or the first week in August. This crop continues to grow until late fall and may be stored during the winter for the next season's seed or sold on the winter markets. The yield of the second crop is usually about two-thirds that of the crop.

Sweet potatoes are started in beds and the plants transferred to the field during May and June. This makes it possible to follow the earliest Irish potatoes with sweet potatoes. A few sweet potatoes reach the market in August and they continue to be harvested then on during the fall. The bulk of the crop is dug in October. They can be stored on the market at any time during the winter. The yield is usually about 100 bushels per acre.

Tomatoes are set out here as soon as danger of frost is passed, usually about the first of April. They do not continue to bear through the entire season here, as they do in the North. The earliest ones begin to ripen in June and in a few weeks the entire crop reaches maturity and the plants

die. This difference in the habit of the plant can be overcome by continuing to set out new plants every ten days or two weeks up to August first. This will make it possible to have a continuous supply of fruit from June until late fall.

Cabbage being more hardy is placed in the ground earlier than tomatoes and the earliest is ready for market the latter part of May. The bulk of the crop reaches market in June and by July 15th very little of the home-grown product is to be found.

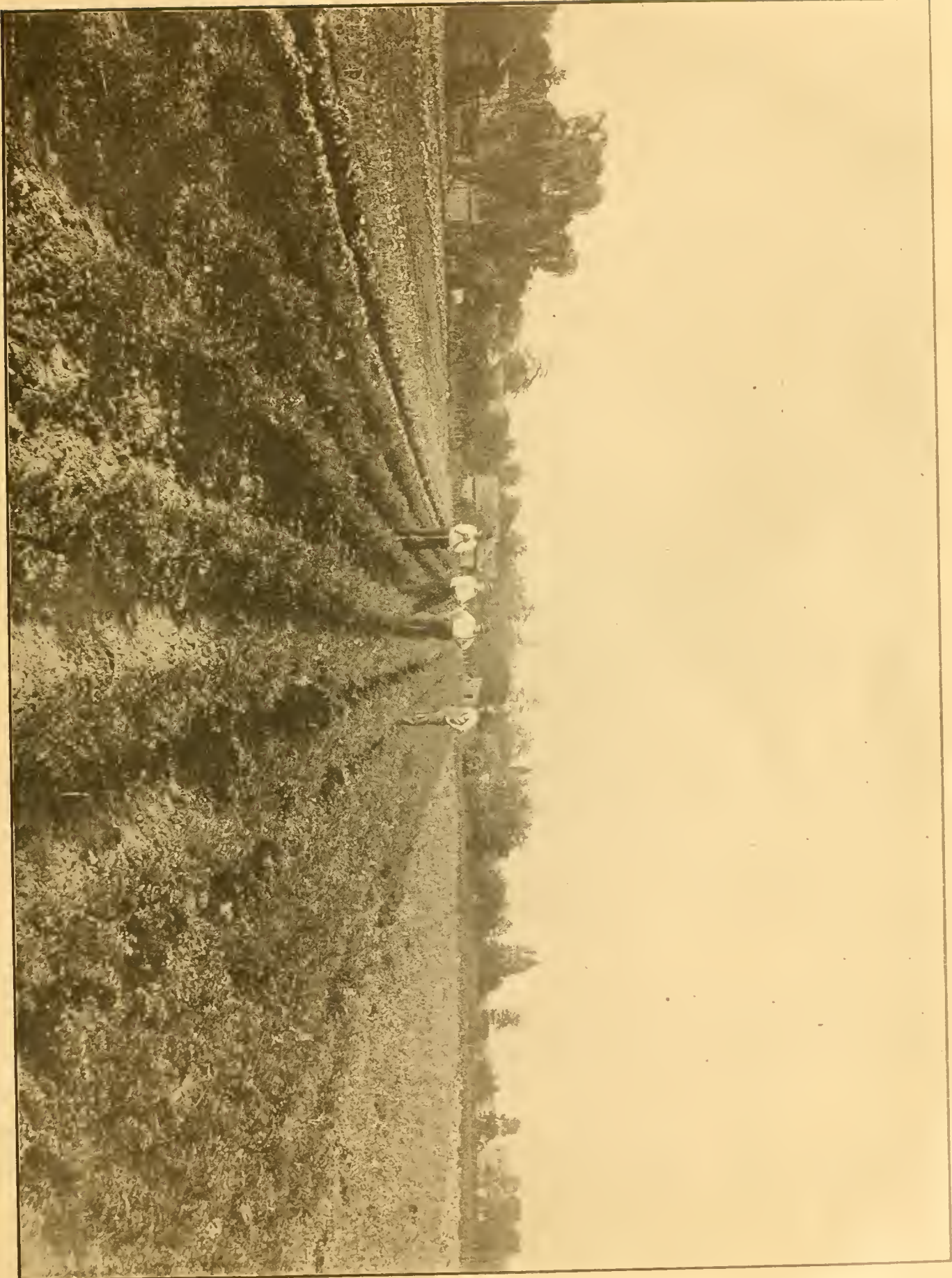
This is essentially a cool weather crop and cannot be grown through the entire season as successfully as tomatoes. However, by selecting late varieties and setting the plants out late in protected places, a portion of the crop can be held back until August 1st or 15th, when it will command a better market than the early crop. A second or late crop can be put out in August. This will reach maturity in November when the market is usually good.

All varieties of beans do well here. The first string or snap bean are ready for use in May and by making frequent plantings one can have beans for market from then until the first frost late in the fall. They are a favorite vegetable and are always in demand.

While the crops just considered are probably the ones which would be the most profitable, practically all the crops grown in the middle and Northern States can be raised here successfully. Grain and forage products always command a good price. Comparatively little live stock is kept at present and in order to have the best success there must be an increase along this line.



FARM SCENE, SHADES VALLEY NEAR BIRMINGHAM



MODEL TRUCK FARM NEAR BIRMINGHAM

Extract From the U. S. Soil Survey of Jefferson County, Alabama 1910

Jefferson County, named in honor of our third President, is located in north-central Alabama, on the southern extension of the Appalachian system and in the center of rich iron, coal and limestone belt of the South. The county contains 719,360 acres, or 1,124 square miles, and is an irregularly shaped parallelogram, with its longer dimension, 46 miles, from east to west, and its shorter, 38 miles, from northeast to southwest.

The surface of the country is mainly mountainous to hilly and the drainage is well developed, as shown by the numberless rounded hills, valleys, and the much dissected surface.

In 1817 Alabama was organized as a territory, and in 1819, admitted as a State. At the first session of the legislature Jefferson County was formed from the southern portion of Blount County. Since 1890, however, as part of Jefferson has been annexed to Walker, and a portion of Shelby joined to Jefferson. In 1815 a fort had been erected near Old Jonesboro and a colony of Tennesseans had settled near Woodlawn. Most of the early settlers were from Tennessee, Kentucky, and the Carolinas. The land was then in forest. Jones and Opossum Valleys were cleared first and necessities like corn, oats, wheat, beef, and pork were produced.

The mild climate, fertile soil, and river communication caused the population to increase rapidly. The following table shows the remarkable development since 1880—a development due mainly to the commercial exploitation of the great deposits of limestone, red and brown ore, and bituminous coal.

Population of Jefferson County, Ala., 1880 to 1910

1880.....	23,272
1890.....	88,501
1900.....	140,420
1910.....	235,000

At present the population is chiefly in the cities. The inhabitants are cosmopolitan, including Europeans, most of whom labor in mines and public works, and people from all states who have been attracted by the varied industries and rich possibilities of the county. Birmingham, the county seat, has now an estimated

and Southern. A well-developed system of street and interurban freight and passenger electric lines connect all points between Birmingham and Bessemer. There are many jobbing and wholesale houses that import foodstuffs and the varied necessities of a densely populated industrial center. It is asserted that about 28,000 carloads of alfalfa and other classes of hay are annually shipped in from a dozen near-by states. In spite of the fact that two good crops of Irish potatoes can be raised annually, these and other vegetables are shipped in from Wisconsin and

other Northern States. These fruits and vegetables necessarily bring high prices and could be more cheaply grown at home.

Nearly all the county has rural free delivery. There is a good system of rural schools, high schools, and several colleges. The county is traversed by over 1,100 miles of wagon roads, 220 miles which are macadamized. Other roads are being rebuilt, and this work will be continued until all the main roads are improved. With



SWEET POTATO FIELD, OPOSSUM VALLEY NEAR BIRMINGHAM

population of 150,000, while Bessemer and Ensley are flourishing cities that have doubled their population during the last few years.

At present there is no water communication to the sea, but the transportation of the county is carried on by nine main railroad lines that cover all the county except the extreme western portions, in the mountainous districts. The following railroads enter Birmingham: Alabama Great Southern; Atlanta, Birmingham and Atlantic; St. Louis and San Francisco; Central of Georgia; Mobile and Ohio; Louisville and Nashville; Seaboard Air Line; Illinois Central;

the abundance of limestone for cement, and accessible sandstone and chert, road improvement is easily and cheaply carried on.

The industrial development in Jefferson County has been so rapid that agriculture has not kept pace with it. In spite of the extremely high prices paid for all farm products, the county produces but an insignificant fraction of its foodstuffs. At present, even with the increasing prices for land, it is not unusual for a farmer to buy land and sell enough truck to pay for it in from one to three years. Notwithstanding this and the abundance of truck soil, the industry is in



6 MONTHS OLD POLAND-CHINA PIGS RAISED ON THE FARM OF R. N. BELL, FULTON SPRINGS NEAR BIRMINGHAM

its infancy, the bulk of the vegetables coming from outside the State.

During the last five years the market-gardening industry has become a leading feature on the soils within driving distance of Birmingham. The gardens are from one to five acres in extent, and while not farmed as systematically as in older localities where the industry has been long established, in proportion to labor and capital invested they are extremely profitable. Truck land can be rented for from \$1 to \$5 an acre. The demand for sweet corn is great and two crops can be produced, the first being sold in June and the second in the fall.

Watermelons are a general crop on many farms, where the owners make a practice of having something to sell whenever they go to the city. Melons are extremely profitable and succeed best on the sandy soils, though heavy applications of fertilizers are required, and but one crop can be grown in the same field without rotation or a rest of several years. Two crops of Irish potatoes can be grown in seasons of sufficient rainfall. The first crop averages 125 to 175 bushels an acre; the second is expected to yield about 100 bushels. Only one crop can be produced from southern-grown seed.

Sweet potatoes succeed well on all the lighter soils. The yield ranging from 150 to 250 bushels per acre. Although prices are never less than 75 cents a bushel, and often more than \$1, only small patches are planted. The "Bunch Yam" and Dooley are favorites. There is room for the farmer who understands the crop and soil adaption to grow both kinds of potatoes on a large commercial scale.

Tomatoes do well on all soils, but succeed best on well-fertilized heavier types. In July and August, during market gluts, they may sell as low as 30 cents a bushel, when some may be shipped south. Even at this price they should be profitable, as yields of over 200 bushels per acre are often reported. Very early or late tomatoes often bring \$1 a basket of less than one-half bushel capacity.

Cabbage should be more generally grown, especially on the Decatur, Upshur, and Hagerstown soils. In July and August there is often a scarcity, large consignments being shipped from the North.

The Dekalb and limestone soils are well adapted to strawberries and blackberries, although few are grown, and berries are imported from the South and from Cullman County. The price is always high and the culture of these fruits would prove profitable. Large quantities of cantaloupes are grown and marketed at profitable prices. Beets, peas, peppers, cucumbers, kale, spinach and cauliflower find a ready sale and are well adapted to the lighter sandy Dekalb soils. Turnips are universally grown as a winter crop.



COUNTRY ROAD IN BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT

The culture of tree fruits is in a neglected condition. Several years ago many pear orchards were planted. These did well for a time, but have lately been damaged by blight. The Kieffer and the Garber seem most resistant to this disease. Peach culture has been tried, the prevailing opinion being that peaches are not adapted to the soil or climate. Judging from the present lack of care, past failures have been due more to a lack of knowledge concerning the culture and care of the trees than to soil or climatic conditions. The soil survey reports of Blount and Talladega Counties, where the climate and soils are similar to those of this county, state that success has been had in growing the Elberta peach. There is little doubt that when the proper cultural methods are under-

stood it will be found that the slopes of the Dekalb shale loam and the phases of the silt loam and sandy loam will produce well. Healthy growing trees were often seen on these types. The Clarksville stony loam will also produce a high quality of fruit.

Climate and elevation do not adapt the county to the growing of long-keeping winter apples, but they can be grown and kept until January. Hackworth is a favorite summer fruit, while Ben Davis on the Clarksville and Winesap on the Hagerstown stony loam should do well.

Judging from the abundance of wild plums and grapes, certain of the tame varieties should do well, especially at higher elevations. Few cultivated grapes are seen, but the

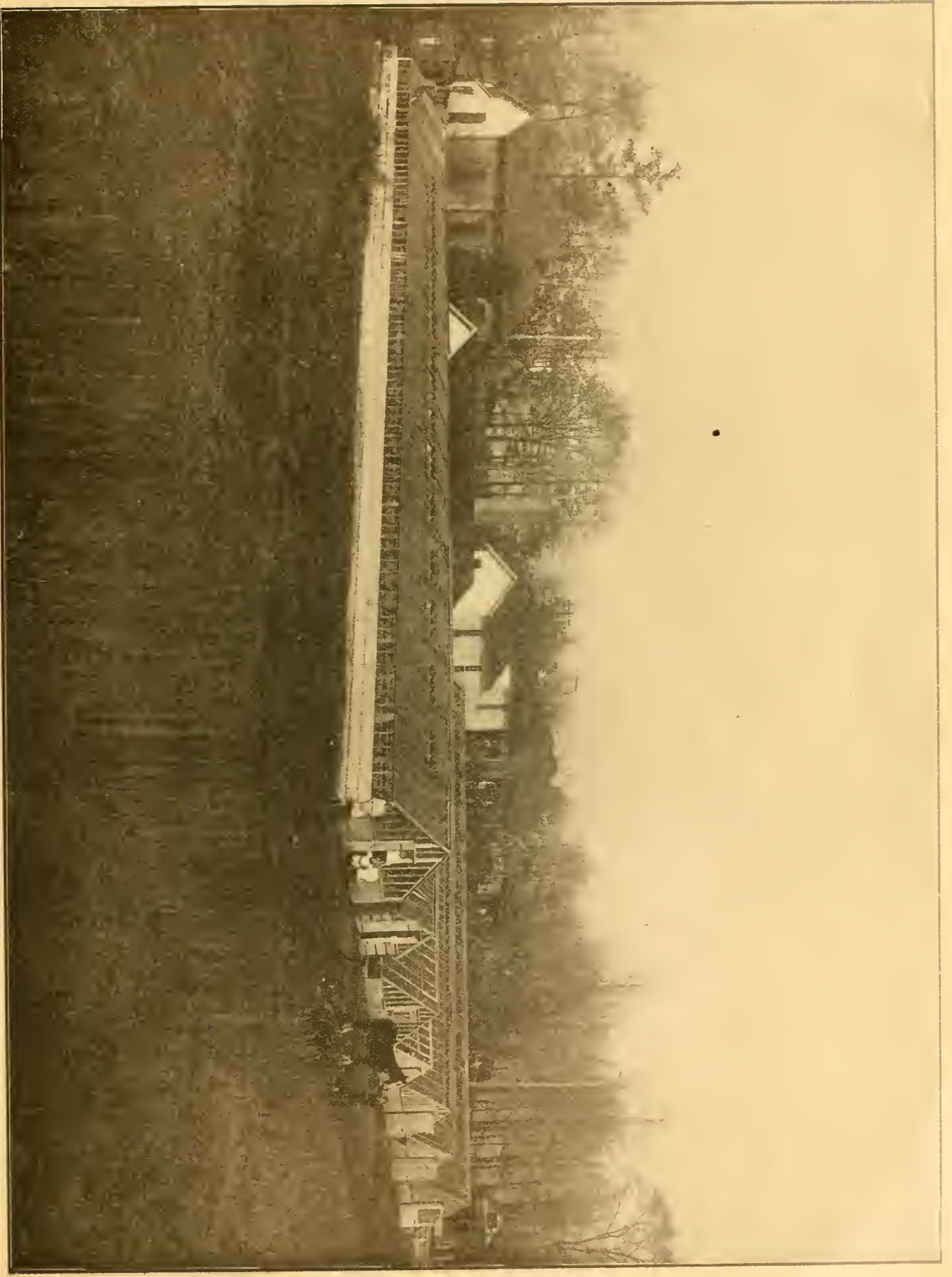
vines were thrifty and productive. The stony, gravelly, and shaly phases of all soils will produce scuppernongs and muscadines of good flavor.

On the whole, Birmingham with its increasing population, furnishes one of the best markets in the South for all soil products, and the soils are so well adapted to truck and other subsistence crops that many times the area now devoted to their production could be profitably utilized.

Although the soil will produce all the standard forage crops, the dairy interest are not extensively developed. The farmer keeps one or two cows for family use. Near Birmingham numerous small dairies of six to twelve cows supply milk for city use. The dairies are frequently examined by a sanitary inspector and the milk is of good quality and meets a ready sale at 25 cents a gallon wholesale or 10 cents a quart retail the year round.

Soils

The great diversity of the soils of Jefferson County, with their accompanying variations of elevation, slope, drainage, etc., adapting them to a considerable range of agricultural use, results largely from their formation from these rocks of widely varying textural and mineralogical characteristics. The resulting soils range in



GREENHOUSES OF A. J. KOENIG IN SUBURB OF BIRMINGHAM

their texture from the excessively stony members of the Dekalb and Clarksville series, which contain in many places from 50 to 75 per cent of sandstone and chert fragments, through the light textured Dekalb fine sandy loam, to the heavy Wabash and Conasauga clays. The depth of the soil material varies from a few inches in the rougher portions of the county to many feet in the case of the Huntington, Decatur and Hagerstown soils.

In topographic position the soils range from the level Huntington silt loam to the mountainous rough, stony land and the knolls and ridges of the Clarksville stony loam. As already stated, the Dekalb series is derived from the Carboniferous rocks, the silty and sandy members occurring where the topography is smoothest and conditions for the accumulation of a comparatively deep, fine-textured soil most favorable. Among these Carboniferous rocks are found irregular knobs, narrow droughty ridges and long trough-shaped valleys.

The Clarksville loam owes its origin mainly to the Fort Payne chert formation of the lower Carboniferous and to the cherty inclusions in the Knox dolomite formation of the lower Silurian. The greater proportion of this type occupies the cherty hills and ridges northeast of Birmingham between Red Mountain and Sand Mountain, ending in mountains of rough stony land farther north.

The Upshur stony loam is derived from the Clinton iron ore of the Red Mountain formation, which, upon weathering, gives rise to a soil along the exposed narrow ridges.

The Conasauga clay and certain phases of the Hagerstown soils are derived from the flatwoods or Coosa shales of Cambrian age, which are characterized by shales and interbedded limestones of nearly vertical inclination.

The Knox dolomite and the Trenton limestone contribute most largely to the formation of the Decatur and Hagerstown soils occupying the Jones and Opossum valleys, though in the

case of Hagerstown stony loam more or less of the stony material comes from the cherty formations giving rise to the Clarksville stony loam.

The Huntington silt loam, Huntington gravelly loam, and Wabash clay are alluvial soils derived from sediments deposited by streams at times of high water, and are still in process of formation.

Summary

The Jefferson County Area lies in the north-central part of the State of Alabama and comprises 719,360 acres, or 1,124 square miles. It is the seat of the most extensive coal, iron and limestone deposits in the South.

The county has two main topographic divisions—the Cahaba Valley

crop growth and generally well distributed throughout the year.

Industrial development has stimulated trucking and general produce farming. The staple crops in general are corn and cotton with some forage crops. Dairying interests are being extended.

Farm labor is chiefly colored and is well paid owing to competition with the mines and other industrial enterprises.

Deeper plowing and more frequent tillage should be practiced. Winter cover crops should be sown on all cotton and corn fields in order to prevent erosion and leaching, and at the same time to add humus to the soil.

Systematic rotation should be introduced.

More hogs and farm stock should be kept. Goats and sheep will do well in forested portions and no non-agricultural land.

Thirteen soil types, representing eight series, were mapped in the county. As regards manner of formation, these soils are of two broad classes, namely, alluvial and residual.

The alluvial soils are the Wabash clay, Huntington gravelly loam, and Huntington silt loam. The first two are important soils, but of limited extent. The last

named is a very strong soil and is a favorite for the growing of corn and truck.

The residual limestone soils include the Decatur clay loam, Hagerstown stony loam, Hagerstown loam, and the Clarksville stony loam.

The Decatur clay loam is a strong soil, but the bulk of the type is located close to growing cities, and is held at high prices for building sites. It is naturally suited to a wide range of crops, and with careful tillage and the use of manures can be profitably used for trucking.

The Hagerstown stony loam is well adapted to fruit growing and to the usual farm crops.

The Hagerstown loam is a good general farming soil and its use for market gardening is increasing.

The Clarksville stony loam is the



A \$600 COTTAGE

and the valleys of Jones and Opossum creeks, and the much dissected upland to the north and west of these valleys. The elevation varies from less than 240 to 1,400 feet, with an average of 500 to 800 feet above sea.

The important rivers are Little Cahaba, Warrior and Locust Fork.

Transportation facilities are good. In addition to nine main railroads, there is an excellent system of macadamized roads.

The principal cities and towns are Birmingham, with its numerous suburbs, and Bessemer, Ensley, Leeds, Trussville and Warrior.

The climate is exceptionally mild and favorable to a wide variety of staple and special crops. Snow is rare, and freezing weather seldom lasts for more than a few days each winter. The rainfall is ample for

best soil for the growing of tree and bush fruits. Systematic orcharding would be very profitable here.

The Dekalb shale loam, residual for shale, occurs in the rougher upland country. Hillside areas have many of the physical characteristics of the grape soils of the Northern

States. The famous scuppernong grape grows especially well on the hilly ridges and slopes. The type is susceptible of improvement and under modern methods is a profitable farming soil. Where the slope permits, Irish potatoes will succeed. It is better adapted to Irish than sweet

potatoes.

The Dekalb silt loam is of very wide extent and has certain variations of texture that make it a favorite for general farming and trucking. Market gardening will prove more profitable on this type than any other form of agriculture.



REGISTERED JERSEY COW AND CALF RAISED ON R. N. BELL'S
FARM, FULTON SPRINGS NEAR BIRMINGHAM

Letters From Local Truck Farmers to The Farm Movement Department

From a Florist and Gardener



A. J. KOENIG

Mr. Koenig's Greenhouses will found on another page

Woodlawn, Ala., July 29 1910.

Mr. S. Hechinger,
Birmingham, Ala.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your question, "What are the possibilities of success in the Floricultural, Horticultural and vegetable growing line, in the Birmingham District, and Jefferson County, Ala." I will state that I have had 30 years' experience in the business, south of the Ohio River, and of the several places where I have been located, I consider the Birmingham District superior to some localities which are reputed to be ideal. The greatest drawback here it seems to me, is that we have not got the men here who thoroughly understand the Horticultural and Gardening business and who are capable and willing to devote their best efforts in that line. But a few here seem very successful, and they are men who are not what we might term professionals in these lines either. I have in mind several who had other trades and who drifted into the gardening and vegetable growing line, and are very successful.

As to myself, with my life experience in the florist and gardening business, I have been able to grow as fine a stock of flowers and vegetables as can be grown anywhere in the United States.

My experience with roses, carnations, chrysanthemums, bedding plants, etc., etc., is, that we can compete with any part of the country.

As to vegetable growing, this locality will compare favorably with such noted districts as Louisville, Ky., and parts of Indiana and Ohio, and the demand and prices are certainly far better here. I am confident that experienced men who thoroughly understand gardening could make Jefferson County one of the garden spots of the South, and a man's chances of making money would only be limited by his capabilities of producing the goods. In certain localities I also find that fruits such as apples, peaches, plums,

etc., do exceptionally well; while small fruits, such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, etc., make excellent crops. Having had the chance of seeing almost every part of Jefferson County for the last five summers, and having noticed the growing crops very closely, I found that certain localities are far superior for some crops than others, the cause of this is that we have so many different kinds of soil here, in some places the soil being a very rich red loam, some places sandy, some clay, and also limestone soil. A great many times all the different soils can be found on a ten acre tract, some of the mountain sides are cherly and stony but make excellent orchards and vineyards.

Of course we have our troubles here just the same as in other states, sometimes a little too wet and sometimes a little too dry, but taking it altogether it is God's country anyway.

Having had the wanderlust very badly in my younger days, I traveled through almost every state in the Union several times, looking for an ideal place to settle, and I found that even the ideal places have the same drawbacks that we find here, only very often worse. I would like to dwell on several other subjects, such as our very fine climate, pure water, etc., but time prevents.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, in my estimation, anyone settling in Jefferson County and devoting their energy and brains to any line in agriculture or horticulture, would undoubtedly be successful beyond their fondest dreams; at least that has been the experience of

Yours truly,
A. J. KOENIG.

\$418 worth of Strawberries from one-quarter of an acre

Ensley, Ala., June 29th, 1910.

Mr. S. Hechinger, Secretary,
Farm Movement Department,
Chamber of Commerce,
Birmingham, Ala.

Dear Sir:

In view of the movement of your Chamber of Commerce to induce farmers and truck-gardeners to come to our county, perhaps a bit of information in regard to the fertility of our soils may be useful to you. I am cultivating a forty acre farm, three miles from Ensley, which brings me an income of \$1,800.00 a year, besides making a living for two other families, who work for me on half shares. We raise all kinds of vegetables and have two acres in strawberries. Perhaps you will think I exaggerate, when I tell you that I sold this spring \$418.00 worth

of strawberries from one-quarter of an acre, and my land is no better than most of the lands in Jefferson County. There is no trouble for any man who has grit and understands farming and gardening to make money here. We have the lands and the climate and the market—a combination which cannot be found in any other region—and if once the people in the North will realize these great advantages, they will flock down here as fast as the railroads can carry them.

Yours for success,
W. L. RICKLES.

From a German Gardener



FRITZ BOCK

A Picture of Mr. Bock's Farm will be Found on Another Page.

Powderly, Ala., July 16th, 1910.

Mr. S. Hechinger, Secretary,
Birmingham, Ala.

Dear Sir:—

I immigrated to this country from Germany three and a half years ago, and after living in New Jersey for a little while, I came to the Birmingham District, in the fall of 1908. I had only a few dollars left when I arrived here, not enough to begin anything with and although I am a professional gardener, I first worked in coal mines and succeeded in saving about \$300 from my wages in the course of 18 months. In April of this year I leased a five acre truck farm about two miles from the center of the city for which I pay \$15.00 a month rent, including the house. The land on this place had been cultivated before, but was in a sadly neglected condition. It responded nevertheless very quickly to the proper handling—thorough plowing and a plentiful supply of manure—and in June, scarcely two months after I took hold of the place, I had a generous crop of vegetables, such as cabbage, tomatoes, radishes, lettuce, snap-beans, peas, etc., the proceeds of which amounted to \$30.00 a week. I have one mule and with the exception of hiring a man for a couple of days, I did all the work myself. I sell my vegetables direct to consumers in my neighborhood from a wagon, and never had any

trouble with disposing of all I carry with me.

This is a fine country. The summer heat is not greater here than it is in New Jersey and the winters are very mild; I have plenty of good water on my place and since coming here my family, as well as myself, have been in excellent health. I regard the Birmingham District as a good section for people to settle, especially for farmers and gardeners. There is a great demand here for poultry and eggs, as well as vegetables and fruits and with the cheap lands for rent and sale I do not see why more people do not come down here to live. It must be that they do not know the opportunities which are here for every man who is willing to work and use the advantages this section offers. Birmingham is a great town and from all I see it will greatly develop in the next few years.

Yours respectfully,

FRITZ BOCK.

From a Successful Market Gardener



B. C. GARMAN

Farm Movement Committee,
Chamber of Commerce,
Birmingham, Ala.

Gentlemen:—

My three years' experience in vegetable-gardening in the Birmingham District and the results I have obtained certainly prove that there is not any section to be found anywhere in this country, where a practical farmer or gardener can succeed quicker than he can here. The man with plenty of money can of course make a success anywhere, but I speak of the man, who has only a few hundred dollars to start with, and who is intelligent, thrifty and knows his business. He cannot select a better location. The soils are fertile and readily yield to an intelligent handling. The climate is mild; we have one of the healthiest cities in the country and Birmingham is the best market in the South. I rented my place three years ago. The land had not been cultivated for several years and was overrun with weeds. Notwithstanding this, I succeeded in raising during the first year a crop of vegetables which brought me \$1,800. This year

my crops on five acres were about as follows: One and one-half acre English peas, one-half acre turnips, one-half acre beets, one-half acre carrots, three-quarters acre lettuce, one-half acre spinach and the balance to mustard, radish, Swiss onions, kohlrabi, etc. I also have 1,800 feet of hot-bed that I use for starting early plants.

Part of my spinach and onions I planted last fall, also a few turnips and some celery that I marketed in January and February.

On January 12th I planted one acre to English peas; on February 1st to 10th I planted beets, carrots, lettuce, turnips, radish mustard, spinach and parsley. I planted my peas in rows 4 1-2 feet apart and on March 15th I planted a row of corn between each row of peas. I planted my lettuce, carrots and beets in rows 12 inches apart with every fourth row 16 inches. On March 21st I planted early corn in the 16 inch rows. I mixed a few radish seed with the carrot seed; the radish came off first and were sold before the carrots were large enough to need work.

I also mixed radish seed with parsley seed and got a crop of radish before the parsley needed work. I sowed mustard in beds, also some turnips and sold greens which was off the ground by first of April and I set this ground to egg-plants and pepper. My



THIS WAGON LOAD OF VEGETABLES BROUGHT \$40.00 IN THE BIRMINGHAM MARKET. IT IS FROM THE TRUCK FARM OF B. C. GARMAN



TOMATOES AND TURNIPS FROM B. C. GARMAN'S TRUCK FARM IN SUBURB OF BIRMINGHAM

spinach was ready to market in time to set the ground to tomatoes. I also planted okra, squash and cucumbers between my turnip rows. On the 8th of March I sold radish, on the 19th of March I sold mustard and turnip greens, on April 5th sold first beets, sold the first head lettuce on April 7th, first spring spinach March 9th, first carrots May 1st, first tomatoes June 4th, first corn June 21st. By August the first all the crops mentioned except egg-plants and pepper had been sold and the ground being planted to fall crops such as snap beans, beets, carrots, salsify, kohlrabi, endive, lettuce, spinach and celery.

My help in making and marketing this crop cost me \$120.00 and my son helped morning and evening before and after school. I have sold to August first, \$1,503.68, and expect my fall crop to bring me as much as the spring crop.

The foregoing description of my work this year gives a fairly good idea what can be accomplished with the soils here; and what I am doing every one can do here, who thoroughly understand gardening and applies the necessary industry, patience and perseverance.

Yours very truly,

B. C. GARMAN,

201 Canal Street, West End.

From an Amateur Chicken Raiser

The following letter was written by a young man, holding a position in the city. He lives in a beautiful little home, owned by him—the reward of a few years of thrift and economy.

Mr. S. Hechinger,

Secretary Farm Movement Dept.,

Chamber of Commerce, B'ham, Ala.

Dear Sir:—

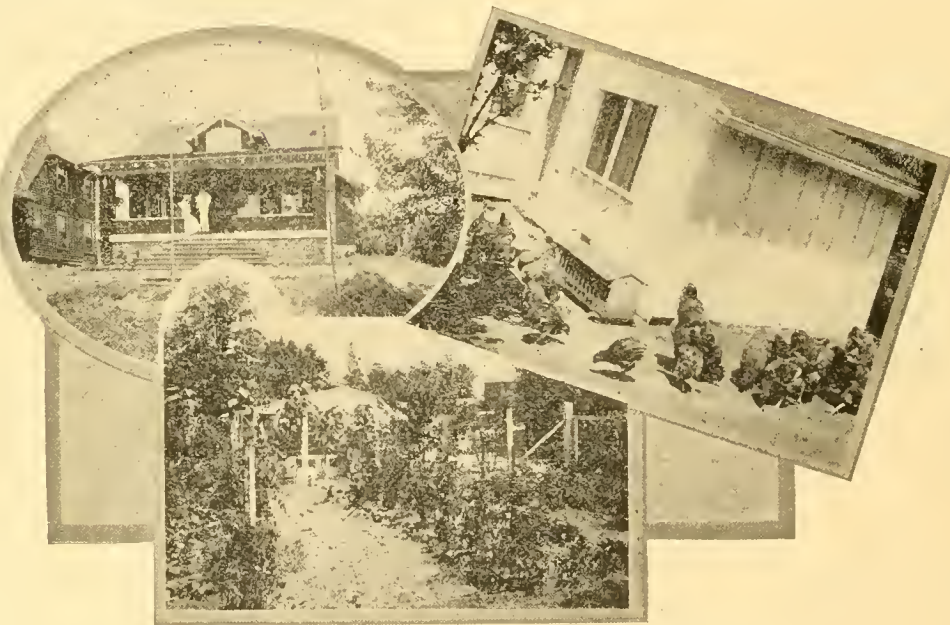
We have a small home in one of the prettiest spots in our beautiful city and besides our little garden, which furnishes us all the vegetables we can eat the year around, we raise chickens.

We have demonstrated to ourselves, at least, that chickens may be most profitably raised and kept in a small space if one is willing to pay attention to details, as is necessary to make a success of anything. Our actual chicken yard is only 20x50 feet.

Two seasons ago we started with one male and three females of the Buff Orpington breed—the most desirable, we think, of course. We secure quality in our stock in preference to quantity, going to a leading breeder for our start. Later we added three hens, making six in all. On January 1st of this year, after having kept a strict account of all expenditures and income, they showed a profit of 8.40, plus the value of eggs consumed, of which no account was kept. However, no eggs were purchased by us during the entire year. This year 101 chickens were hatched from March to May. Fifteen were lost through accidents which could have been avoided, about the same number have been served upon the table, leaving us about 60, the largest being only four months old.

Early in the spring, the yard was spaded and planted in rape and sun-flower. The rape grew quickly and furnished green food for them; the sun-flowers have furnished good shade, and now each morning a few stalks are broken and bent to the ground, the leaves and seed of which the chickens eagerly devour. Our garden which is 27x50 feet, supplied more lettuce, radishes, Swiss chard and other green stuff than the family of two consumed, so a quantity of that has also been fed the chickens. The poultry houses provide summer and winter quarters. In winter, the house boarded on three sides,

and practically open in front on account of large window and door, is used, and the wire-covered house is closed at the back to knock off the direct north wind, and the floor, covered with alfalfa hay or straw, into which the grain is thrown so the chickens will scratch for it, thereby obtaining necessary exercise. In summer, the closed house is used only for laying purposes, and the chickens roost in the wire covered house, which is naturally cooler. Trap nests are used in October and November when the pullets start laying. Of course, the experienced poultryman knows that there are numerous instances of pullets laying at four months, but with the average amateur and average flock, they are doing well to lay at six and seven months. For the benefit of the uninitiated will say that trap-nests are nests so arranged that one can determine which hens are laying and which are not. The non-layers are served on the table, while the layers are kept and used as breeders.



POULTRY FARM OF CHAS. A. FITZGERALD

In this way, one does not make the mistake of killing the laying hen and retaining a non-producer. There are a number of good trap nests on the market, but if one is energetic, practical satisfactory nests may be easily made with a piece of wire, a few nails, a hammer and some boards. Absolute cleanliness of house and yards is, of course, preserved.

All this is attended to in the one or two hours before breakfast, and should convince the most skeptical that chickens can be raised on a large scale when one can give his entire time to it and the necessary room secured. In this district, where we have such mild winters as compared with our Northern brother, chicks may be hatched so much earlier in the season; in fact, there is no reason why they may not be hatched satisfactorily every month in the year with a minimum of care. The soil is fertile, and plant life makes vigorous growth, so sufficient

food may be raised. A truck garden and poultry farm go well together, and when to this is added the fruit that may be grown, and to top it all, the good market that Birmingham affords, a most inviting field is here presented for thrifty and industrious families. Everyone knows that other States are constantly supplying our markets with poultry and farm products, which would not be the case had we more poultrymen and gardeners within our own borders.

Yours very truly,

CHAS. A. FITZGERALD.

Birmingham, Ala., Aug. 2, 1910.

Another Successful Truck Farmer

A View of Mr. Maddox's Farm will be Found On Another Page.

East Lake, Ala., July 6th, 1910.

Farm Movement Committee,

Chamber of Commerce,
Birmingham, Ala.
Gentlemen:—

I have been raising vegetables on the lands in the Birmingham District for the last sixteen years. My experience has shown me that almost any kind of vegetable can be profitably grown here. I have raised every variety, such as tomatoes, asparagus, squash, cabbage, cucumbers, beets, lettuce, spinach, mustard, turnips, carrots, okra, peas, snap-beans, egg-plant, peppers, onions and potatoes, all of them

will bring a fair profit 'n the market.

For instance, 200 bushels of tomatoes can be raised to the acre, which will bring an average of \$1.00 a bushel. Peas, one of the most saleable crops, will average from 75 to 100 bushels per acre, worth \$125.00. Turnips, another popular and most sought for vegetable, make a profit of \$150.00 per acre. They are very easily grown. Spinach make an average profit of \$200 per acre. Sweet and Irish potatoes, for which there is always a large demand, are a very profitable crop, the price paid for them in the Birmingham market varying from 75 cents to \$1.50 per bushel.

I generally have two crops of Irish potatoes, which average 150 bushels an acre on my land. Sweet potatoes yield a somewhat larger crop; I have several times made as much as 250 bushels of sweet potatoes on one acre.

With one of the best markets in the South

for all soil products; with our easily cultivated lands and the mild climate, I know of no superior section in this country for a farmer or gardener to settle, than Jefferson County, Alabama. We have room here for a thousand truck-farmers, dairy and poultry men, all of whom, if they are the right kind of men, will prosper here within a few years. Of course one has to be industrious, understand soil culture and persevere.

With best wishes for the success of your undertaking, I am,

Yours respectfully,

M. F. MADDOX.

peach-trees. As you will notice this tree is covered with peaches to the breaking point and there are many more like it on my place out at East Lake. Are the lands around here fertile? Do they yield good crops? Well, I came over from England 25 years ago and was around the country a good bit before I settled here. I have lived in Illinois and other Northern States and I have never seen lands which equal ours. Why the soils in this section are so rich, that sometimes people contrary to "As thou shalt sow, so shalt thou reap" will actually reap without sowing. Take my case for instance.

spring I planted some corn and tomatoes and a few other vegetables on two acres. But the trees are entirely neglected, yet a good many of these trees bear fruit year after year and in abundance at that, as you will notice by the photograph.

This surely proves the great productiveness of our lands; and with our beautiful climate, with plenty of good water and a city which soon will be equal in size and importance to the great iron and coal city of the North, Pittsburg, Pa. I do not know of



PEACH TREE IN BLOOM ON R. BLACKBURNE'S FARM AND ORCHARD
IN SUBURB OF BIRMINGHAM

Reaping Without Sowing

Norwood, June 24th, 1910.

Mr. S. Hechinger, Secretary,
Farm Movement Department,
Chamber of Commerce,
Birmingham, Ala.

Dear Sir:—

I send you a photograph of one of my

I have 19 acres out at East Lake with 1,000 fruit trees upon it. Being in the contracting business and living in the city I have very little time to attend to them. There is a fine house on the place and no one to live in except that my family stays out there occasionally for a few days. Now and then I have the weeds cut off and this

a better section in this country for people to move to, especially agricultural people, than the Birmingham District.

Yours respectfully,

R. BLACKBURNE.





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Inner Circle 25 Miles. Outer Circle 900 Miles